THE

# OLD MAID;

A K. Murphy (A.)

## COMEDY,

In TWO ACTS.

Performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

## DRURY-LANE.

Tempus erit, quo tu, quæ nunc excludis amantem,
Frigida Desertâ Nocte jacebis Anus.

*Ovid.*

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# Dramatis Perſonæ.

## M E N.

| | |
|---|---|
| CLERIMONT, | MR. OBRIEN. |
| Capt. CAPE, | MR. KING. |
| MR. HARLOW, | MR. KENNEDY. |
| MR. HEARTWELL, | MR. PHILLIPS. |
| FOOTMAN, | MR. CASTLE. |

BRITISH MUSEUM

## W O M E N.

| | |
|---|---|
| MRS. HARLOW, | MISS HAUGHTON. |
| MISS HARLOW, | MRS. KENNEDY. |
| TRIFLE, | MISS HIPPISLEY. |

THE

# OLD MAID.

## ACT the FIRST.

*Enter Mrs.* HARLOW *and Miſs* HARLOW.

Mrs. HARLOW.

MY dear ſiſter, let me tell you---

Miſs HARLOW.

But, my dear ſiſter, let me tell you it is in vain; you can ſay nothing that will have any effect.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Not if you won't hear me; only hear me.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! ma'am, I know you love to hear yourſelf talk, and ſo pleaſe yourſelf; talk on at your uſual rate, if your fancy ſo inclines you; but I have taken my reſolution, and nothing ſhall alter it.

Mrs. HARLOW.

And yet, upon due reflection your mind may change.

Miſs

Miſs HARLOW.

Never, ſiſter, never.

Mrs. HARLOW.

You can't be ſure of that, ſiſter; when you have conſidered every thing---

Miſs HARLOW.

Upon no conſideration.

Mrs. HARLOW.

You don't know how that may be: recollect, ſiſter, that you are no chicken: you are not now in that ſprightly ſeaſon of life, when giddineſs and folly are excuſable, nay becoming. Your age, ſiſter---

Miſs HARLOW.

Age, ma'am---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Do but hear me, ſiſter; do but hear me. A perſon of your years---

Miſs HARLOW.

My years, ſiſter!---Upon my word---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Nay, no offence, ſiſter---

Miſs HARLOW.

But there is offence, ma'am: I don't underſtand what you mean by it. Always thwarting me with my years; my years, indeed! when perhaps, ma'am, if I was to die of old age, ſome folks might have reaſon to look about them.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

She feels it, I ſee---oh! how I delight in mortifying her---(*aſide*)---ſiſter, if I did not love you, I am ſure I ſhould not talk to you in this manner. But how can you make ſo unkind a return as to alarm me about myſelf?---In ſome ſixteen or eighteen years after you, to be ſure, I own I ſhall begin to think of making my will. How could you be ſo ſevere?---

Miſs HARLOW.

Some ſixteen or eighteen years, ma'am!---if you you would own the truth, ma'am,---I believe ma'am, ---you would not find, ma'am, that the diſparity, ma'am, is not ſo very great, ma'am---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well! I vow paſſion becomes you inordinately: It blends a few roſes with the lillies of your cheek, and---

Miſs HARLOW.

And though you are married to my brother, ma'am, I would have you to know, ma'am, that you are not thereby any way authoriſed, to take unbecoming liberties with his ſiſter. I am independent of my brother, ma'am: my fortune is in my own hands, ma'am, and ma'am---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well! do you know when your blood circulates a little, that I think you look mighty well? But you was in the wrong not to marry at my age. Sweet three and twenty! you can't conceive what a deal of

good

good it would have done your temper and your ſpirits, if you had married early.

Miſs HARLOW.

Inſolent! provoking, female malice!

Mrs. HARLOW.

But to be waiting till it is almoſt too late in the day, and force one's ſelf to ſay ſtrange things; with the tongue and heart at variance all the time----" I don't mind the hideous men" " I am very happy as I am."---" I don't deſire to change my condition"--- and while thoſe words are at your tongue's end, the heart murmurs inwardly, and flutters upon the tenter-hooks of expectation.

Miſs HARLOW.

I upon tenter-hooks!

Mrs. HARLOW.

And to be at this work of four grapes, till one is turned of three and forty!

Miſs HARLOW.

Three and forty, ma'am!---I deſire, ſiſter---I deſire, ma'am---three and forty, ma'am!

Mrs. HARLOW.

Nay---nay---nay---don't be angry; don't blame me; blame my huſband; he is your own brother, and he knows your age: he told me ſo.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! ma'am, I ſee your drift: but you need not give yourſelf thoſe airs, ma'am---the men don't ſee with your eyes, ma'am---years, indeed!---Three and

and forty, truly!---I'll aſſure you---upon my word---very fine!---But I ſee plainly, ma'am, what you are at---Mr. Clerimont, madam!---Mr. Clerimont, ſiſter! that's what frets you. A young huſband, ma'am; younger than your huſband, ma'am: Mr. Clerimont, let me tell you---

*Enter* TRIFLE.

TRIFLE.

Oh! rare news, ma'am, charming news: we have got another letter.

Miſs HARLOW.

From whom?---from Mr. Clerimont?---where is it?

TRIFLE.

Yes, ma'am! from Mr. Clerimont, ma'am.

Miſs HARLOW.

Let me ſee it; let me ſee it; quick; quick;

(*reads*)

"Madam,

"The honour of a letter from you has ſo filled "my mind with joy and gratitude, that I want "words of force to reach but half my meaning. I "can only ſay that you have revived a heart that "was expiring for you, and now beats for you "alone"---

There ſiſter, mind that! years indeed!

(*reads to herſelf*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

I wiſh you joy, ſiſter: I wiſh I had not gone to

Ranelagh with her laſt week. Who could have thought that her faded beauties would have made ſuch an impreſſion? (*aſide*)

Miſs HARLOW.

Mind here again, ſiſter. --- (*reads*) "Ever ſince I "had the good fortune of ſeeing you at Ranelagh, "your idea has been ever preſent to me; and "ſince you now give me leave, I ſhall, without "delay, wait upon your brother. The terms he may "think proper to demand, I ſhall readily ſubſcribe to; "for to be your ſlave is dearer to me than liberty. I "have the honour to remain

"The humbleſt of your admirers,

"CLERIMONT."

There, ſiſter!

Mrs. HARLOW

Well! I wiſh you joy again: but remember I tell you, take care what you do. He is young, and of courſe giddy and inconſtant.

Miſs HARLOW.

He is warm, paſſionate, and tender.

Mrs. HARLOW.

But you don't know how long that may laſt; and here are you going to break off a very ſuitable match, which all your friends liked and approved, a match with captain Cape, who to be ſure---

Miſs HARLOW.

Don't name captain Cape, I beſeech you, don't name him.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Captain Cape, let me tell you, is not to be deſpiſed. He has acquired by his voyages to India a very pretty fortune: has a charming box of a houſe upon Hackney-Marſh, and is of an age every way ſuitable to you.

Miſs HARLOW.

There again now!---age! age! age! for ever!---years---years---my years! But I tell you once for all, Mr. Clerimont does not ſee with your eyes. I am determined to hear no more of captain Cape. Odious Hackney-Marſh! ah! ſiſter, you would be glad to ſee me married in a middling way.

Mrs. HARLOW,

I, ſiſter!---I am ſure nobody will rejoice more at your preferment. I am reſolved never to viſit her if Mr. Clerimont marries her. (*aſide*)

Miſs HARLOW.

To cut the matter ſhort, ſiſter, Mr. Clerimont has won my heart: young, handſome, rich, town houſe, country houſe, equipage! To him, and only him will I ſurrender myſelf. Three and forty, indeed!---ha! ha!---you ſee, my dear, dear ſiſter, that theſe features are ſtill regular and blooming; that the love-darting eye has not quite forſook me; and that I have made a conqueſt which your boaſted youth might be vain of.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Oh! ma'am, I beg you pardon, if I have taken too much liberty, it has all ariſen from affection and regard: your good is all I aim at, ſiſter.

Miſs HARLOW.

I humbly thank you for your advice, my ſweet dear friendly ſiſter; but don't envy me, I beg you won't; don't fret yourſelf; you can't conceive what a deal of good ſerenity of mind will do your health. I'll go and write an anſwer directly to this charming, charming letter. Siſter, yours. I ſhall be glad to ſee you, ſiſter, at my houſe in Hill-ſtreet, when I am Mrs. Clerimont. And remember what I tell you: ſome faces retain their bloom and beauty longer than you imagine, my dear ſiſter. Come, Trifle, let me fly this moment. Siſter, your ſervant.

[*Exit with* Trifle.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Your ſervant, my dear!---Well! I am determined to lead the gayeſt life in nature, if ſhe marries Clerimont.---I'll have a new equipage, that's one thing: and I"l have greater routs than her, that's another: Poſitively, I muſt outſhine her there; and I'll keep up a polite enmity with her; go and ſee her, may be once or twice in a winter; Ma'am, I am really ſo "hurried with ſuch a number of acquaintances, that "I can't poſſibly find time." And then to provoke her, "I wiſh you joy, ſiſter, I hear you are breeding." Ha! ha!---that will ſo mortify her---"I "wiſh it may be a boy, ſiſter." Ha! ha!---And then when her huſband begins to deſpiſe her; "really, ſiſter, I pity you; had you taken my ad-"vice, and married the India captain---your caſe is "a compaſſionate one"---Compaſſion is ſo inſolent when a body feels none at all. Ha! ha! it is the fineſt way of inſulting.

*Enter*

*Enter* Mr. HARLOW.

Mr. HARLOW.

So, my dear; how are my ſiſter's affairs going on?

Mrs. HARLOW.

Why, my dear, ſhe has had another letter from Mr. Clerimont. Did you ever hear of ſuch a ſtrange unaccountable thing patched up in a hurry here?

Mr. HARLOW.

Why it is ſudden, to be ſure.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Upon my word, I think you had better adviſe her not to break off with captain Cape.

Mr. HARLOW.

No, not I---I wiſh ſhe may be married to one or other of them. Her temper is really grown ſo very ſour, and there is ſuch eternal wrangling between you both, that I wiſh to ſee her in her own houſe, for the peace and quiet of mine.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Do you know this Mr. Clerimont?

Mr. HARLOW.

No; but I have heard of the family. There is very fine fortune. I wiſh he may hold his intention

Mrs. HARLOW.

I wiſh he may, but I doubt it.

Mr.

Mr. HARLOW.

And truly ſo do I; for between ourſelves, I ſee no charms in my ſiſter.

Mrs. HARLOW.

For my part I can't comprehend it. How ſhe could ſtrike his fancy, is to me the moſt aſtoniſhing thing: After this, I ſhall be ſurpriſed at nothing.

Mr. HARLOW.

Well! ſtrange things do happen. So ſhe is but married out of the way, I am ſatisfied. An old maid in a houſe is the devil.

*Enter a* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr. Clerimont, Sir, to wait on you.

Mr. HARLOW.

Shew him in. (*Exit* Servant) How comes this viſit, pray?

Mrs. HARLOW.

My ſiſter wrote to him to explain himſelf to you. The affair ſeems now to grow ſerious. The gentleman ſeems in earneſt, and in a hurry too. Well, I ſuppoſe he wants to talk to you: I'll leave you to yourſelves. (*aſide as ſhe goes out*) The man muſt be mad to think of her. He muſt have a ſtrange taſte indeed. [*Exit.*

*Enter*

*Enter* CLERIMONT.

Mr. HARLOW.

Your moſt obedient, Sir: be pleaſed to walk in.

CLERIMONT.

I preſume, Sir, you are no ſtranger to the buſineſs that occaſions this viſit.

Mr. HARLOW.

Sir, the honour you do me and my family---

CLERIMONT.

Oh! Sir, to be allied to your family by ſo tender a tie as a marriage with your ſiſter, will at once reflect a credit upon me, and conduce to my happineſs in the moſt eſſential point. I adore your ſiſter, Sir: my ſentiments are not to be expreſſed: ſhe charmed me at the very firſt ſight.

Mr. HARLOW. (*aſide*)

The devil ſhe did!

CLERIMONT.

The ſenſibility of her countenance, the elegance of her figure, the ſweetneſs of her manner---

Mr. HARLOW.

Sir, you are pleaſed to---compliment!

CLERIMONT.

Compliment! I ſpeak the language of the heart. Where merit is ſo apparent, ſo tranſcending all praiſe, he muſt have great ſkill in flattery, who can give an air of compliment to that juſtice, which your ſiſter claims from all.

Mr.

Mr. Harlow.

The ſweetneſs of my ſiſter's manner. (*aſide*) Ha! ha!

Clerimont.

I ſaw her, for the firſt time, a few nights ago at Ranelagh: though there was a croud of beauties in the room, thronging and preſſing all around, yet ſhe ſhone amongſt them with ſuperior luſtre. She was walking arm in arm with another lady. No opportunity offered for me to form an acquaintance amidſt the hurry and buſtle of the place. I enquired their names as they were going into their chariot: I was told they were Mrs. and Miſs Harlow. From that moment ſhe won my heart. At one glance I became the willing captive of her beauty.

Mr. Harlow.

A very candid declaration, Sir!---how can this be? The bloom has been off the peach any time theſe fifteen years, to my knowledge. (*aſide*)---You ſee my ſiſter with a favourable eye, Sir.

Clerimont.

A favourable eye! He muſt greatly want diſcernment, who has not a quick perception of her merit.

Mr. Harlow.

You do her a great deal of honour. But this affair---is it not ſomewhat ſudden, Sir?

Clerimont.

I grant it. You may indeed be ſurprized at it, Sir; nor ſhould I have been hardy enough to make any overtures to you,---at leaſt yet awhile,---if ſhe herſelf had not condeſcended to liſten to my paſſion.

She

She has authorized me under her own fair hand to apply to her brother for his conſent.

Mr. HARLOW.

I ſhall be very ready, Sir, to give my approbation to my ſiſter's happineſs.

CLERIMONT.

No doubt you will. But let me not cheriſh an unavailing flame, a flame that already lights up all my tendereſt paſſions.

Mr. HARLOW.

To you, Sir, there can be no exception. I am not altogether a ſtranger to your family and fortune. His language is warm, conſidering my ſiſter's age; but I won't hurt her preferment. (*aſide*)---You will pardon me, Sir, if I obſerve one thing: you are, as one may ſay, juſt coming into life. Have you left the Univerſity?

CLERIMONT.

Left it, Sir?---above a year. I am almoſt two and twenty.

Mr. HARLOW.

And yet, this is a delicate point: have you conſulted your friends?

CLERIMONT.

I have: my uncle, Mr. Heartwell, who propoſes to leave me a very handſome addition to my fortune, which is conſiderable already, he, Sir---

Mr. HARLOW.

Well, Sir, if he has no objection, I can have none.

CLERIMONT.

He has none, Sir; he has given his conſent; he deſires me to loſe no time. I will bring him to pay you a viſit. He approves my choice. You ſhall have it out of his own mouth. Name your hour, and he ſhall attend you.

Mr. HARLOW.

Any time to-day. I ſhall ſtay at home on purpoſe.

CLERIMONT.

In the evening I will conduct him hither. In the mean time I feel an attachment here: the lady, Sir---

Mr. HARLOW.

Oh! you want to ſee my ſiſter. I will ſend her to you, Sir, this inſtant. I beg your pardon for leaving you alone. Ha! ha! who could have thought of her making a conqueſt at laſt? [*Exit.*

CLERIMONT.

Your politeneſs, Sir, upon this occaſion, will lay me under the moſt laſting obligation.---Now, Clerimont, now your heart may reſt content: your doubts and fears may all ſubſide, and joy and rapture take their place. Miſs Harlow ſhall be mine: ſhe receives my vows; ſhe approves my paſſion. *(ſings and dances)* Soft! here ſhe comes---her very appearance controuls my wildeſt hopes, and huſhes my proud heart into reſpect and ſilent admiration.

*Enter* Mrs. HARLOW.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I beg your pardon, Sir, I intrude, perhaps.

CLE-

CLERIMONT.

Madam, (*bows reſpectfully*) you never can intrude, Madam. You---you muſt be ever welcome.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I thought Mr. Harlow was here, Sir.

CLERIMONT.

Madam, he is but juſt gone. How a ſingle glance of that deluding eye overaws and checks each wiſh that flutters in my heart. (*aſide*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

I wonder he would leave you alone, Sir. That is not ſo polite in his own houſe.

CLERIMONT.

How her modeſty throws a veil over her inclinations!---My tongue faulters!---I can't ſpeak to her. (*aſide*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

He ſeems in confuſion. A pretty man too!---That this ſhould be my ſiſter's luck!--- (*aſide*)

CLERIMONT.

Madam!---(*embarraſſed*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

I imagine you have been talking to him on the ſubject of the letter you ſent this morning.

CLERIMONT.

Madam, I have preſumed to---

Mrs. HARLOW.

You are the only perſon, Sir, that will call it preſumption. Mr. Harlow has no objection, I hope.

CLERIMONT.

She hopes! Heavens bleſs her for the word---(*aſide*)---Madam, he has frankly conſented, if his ſiſter will do me that honour.

Mrs. HARLOW.

You do his ſiſter a great deal of honour, Sir,---(*aſide*) a great deal more than ſhe deſerves, if he knew all.

CLERIMONT.

How her modeſty makes her turn aſide that lovely countenance!---Mr. Harlow, Madam, encouraged me to entertain a gleam of hope.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I think you need not deſpair, Sir, if I may venture to hazard my ſentiment.

CLERIMONT.

No doubt you may.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Then, without doubt---(*turns away*) Her ſucceſs is too provoking---(*turns to him*) I believe, Sir,---I think you may entertain ſome degree of hope.

CLERIMONT.

How coyly ſhe pronounces it!---"Oh! ſweet reluctant amorous delay."---Madam, you make me happy.

happy. If any thing could add to the ardour of my affection, you have done it. (*turns from her*). Generous Miſs Harlow!

Mrs. HARLOW.

A propoſal ſo honourable on your part, claims attention, and cannot eaſily be rejected; Mr. Harlow has too much regard for his ſiſter; and the whole family hold themſelves much obliged to you.

CLERIMONT.

Madam, this extreme condeſcenſion has added rapture to the ſentiments I felt before: it ſhall be the endeavour of my life to prove deſerving of the amiable object I have dared to aſpire to.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Sir, I make no doubt of your ſincerity. I have already declared my ſentiments. You know Mr. Harlow's; and if my ſiſter gives her approbation, nothing will be wanting to conclude this buſineſs. If no difficulties ariſe from her-----her temper is uncertain---as to my conſent, Sir, your air, your manner have commanded it. Sir, your moſt obedient: I'll ſend my ſiſter to you. [*Exit.*

CLERIMONT.

Madam, (*bowing*) I ſhall endeavour to repay this goodneſs with exceſs of gratitude. She is an angel!---and yet, ſtupid that I am, I could not give vent to the tenderneſs with which my heart is ready to diſſolve. It is ever ſo with ſincere and generous love; it fills the ſoul with rapture, and then denies the power of uttering what we ſo exquiſitely feel. Generous Miſs Harlow! who could thus ſee thro' my confuſion, interpret all appearances favourably, and with a dignity ſuperior to her ſex's little

little arts, forego the idle ceremonies of coquetting, teazing, and tormenting her admirer. I hear ſomebody. Oh! here comes Miſtreſs Harlow: what a gloom ſits upon her features!---She aſſumes authority here I find. But I'll endeavour by inſinuation and reſpect to make her my friend, or at leaſt to ſoften prejudices, and get the better of that ſour, ill-natured temper.

*Enter* Miſs HARLOW.

Miſs HARLOW.

My ſiſter has told me, Sir---

CLERIMONT.

Ma'am---(*bowing chearfully*)

Miſs HARLOW.

He is a ſweet figure, (*aſide*)

CLERIMONT.

She rather looks like Miſs Harlow's mother than her ſiſter-in-law---(*aſide*)

Miſs HARLOW.

He ſeems abaſh'd----his reſpect is the cauſe----(*aſide*)---My ſiſter told me, Sir, that you was here. I beg pardon for making you wait ſo long.

CLERIMONT.

Oh, ma'am, (*bows*) the gloom diſappears from her face, but the lines of ill-nature remain. (*aſide*)

Miſs HARLOW.

In his confuſion I ſee the ardour of his paſſion.---He has not recovered himſelf!---I'll cheer him with af-

affability---(*aſide*)---Sir, the letter you was pleaſed to ſend, my ſiſter has ſeen, and---

CLERIMONT.

And has aſſured me that ſhe has no objection.

Miſs HARLOW.

I am glad of that, Sir---I was afraid---

CLERIMONT.

No objection. And Mr. Harlow---I have ſeen him too. He has honoured me with his conſent. Now, madam, the only doubt remains with you. May I be permitted to hope---

Miſs HARLOW.

Sir, you appear like a gentleman,---and---

CLERIMONT.

Madam, believe me, never was love more ſincere, more juſtly founded on eſteem, or kindled into higher admiration.

Miſs HARLOW.

Sir, with the reſt of the family I hold myſelf much obliged to you, and---

CLERIMONT.

Obliged!---'tis I that am obliged. There is no merit on my ſide: it is the conſequence of impreſſions made upon my heart; and what heart can reſiſt ſuch beauty, ſuch various graces!

Miſs HARLOW.

The warmth of your expreſſion, Sir---I wiſh my ſiſter heard him. (*aſide*) I am afraid you are laviſh of

of your praiſe; and the ſhort date of your love, Sir---

CLERIMONT.

It will burn with unabating ardor. The ſame charms that firſt inſpired it, will for ever cheriſh, and add new fuel to the flame.---You cannot doubt me, Madam: no, you will not harbour an ungenerous ſuſpicion. You uſe this ſtile, to put my ſincerity to the proof. That, Madam, I perceive is your aim: but could you read the feelings of my heart, you would not thus cruelly keep me in ſuſpence.

MISS HARLOW.

Heavens! if my ſiſter ſaw my power over him ---(*aſide*)---A little ſuſpence cannot be deem'd unreaſonable. Marriage is an important affair; an affair for life; and ſome caution you will allow to be neceſſary.

CLERIMONT.

Madam!---(*diſconcerted*)---Oh! I dread the ſourneſs of her look! (*aſide*)

MISS HARLOW.

One thing, Sir, you will permit me to obſerve. You ſeem to dwell chiefly on articles of external and ſuperficial merit; whereas the more valuable qualities of the mind, prudence, good ſenſe, a well-regulated conduct---

CLERIMONT.

Oh! Ma'am, I am not inattentive to thoſe matters: ſhe has a notable houſehold underſtanding, I warrant her----(*aſide*)----But let me intreat you, Madam, to do juſtice to my principles, and believe that

that never yet a fond, fond heart declared itſelf with more ſincerity.

Miſs HARLOW.

Sir, I will frankly own that I have been trying you all this time, and from henceforth all doubts are baniſhed.

CLERIMONT.

Your words recall me to new life. I ſhall for ever ſtudy to merit this goodneſs. But your fair ſiſter, do you think I can depend upon her conſent? May I flatter myſelf ſhe will not change her mind?

Miſs HARLOW.

My ſiſter cannot be inſenſible of your merit, and the honour you do her and the whole family. And, Sir, as far as I can act with propriety in the affair, I will endeavour to keep them all in a diſpoſition to favour your pretenſions.

CLERIMONT.

Madam---*(bows.)*

Miſs HARLOW.

You have an intereſt in my breaſt that will be buſy for you.

CLERIMONT.

I am eternally devoted to you, Madam---*(bows.)*

Miſs HARLOW.

How modeſt, and yet how expreſſive he is!

(*Aſide.*)

CLERIMONT.

Madam, I ſhall be for ever ſenſible of this extreme condeſcenſion. I ſhall think no pains too great to prove the gratitude and eſteem I bear you. I beg my compliments to Mr. Harlow. I ſhall be here with my uncle in the evening; as early as poſſible I ſhall come. My reſpects to your ſiſter, Ma'am---and pray, Madam, keep her in my intereſt---Madam, your moſt obedient---I have managed the motherly lady finely, I think (*aſide*)

[*Bows, and Exit.*

Miſs HARLOW.

What will my ſiſter ſay now? I ſhall hear no more of her taunts. A malicious thing! I fancy ſhe now ſees that your giddy flirts are not always the higheſt beauties. Set her up, indeed! Had ſhe but heard him, the dear man! what ſweet things he ſaid! and what ſweet things he looked. Well, I am enchanted with him. I ſhall love him to diſtraction.

*Enter* Mrs. HARLOW.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well, ſiſter!---how!---what does he ſay?

Miſs HARLOW.

Say, ſiſter!---Every thing that is charming: he is the prettieſt man! and ſo polite, ſo ſenſible, ſo elegant, ſo every thing that is agreeable!

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well! I am glad of it. But all's well that ends well.

Miſs

Miſs HARLOW.

Envy, ſiſter! Envy, and downright malice!--- Oh! had you heard all the tender things he uttered, and with that extaſy too! that tenderneſs! that delight reſtrained by modeſty!

Mrs. HARLOW.

All that is very true: but ſtill I feel, methinks, as if every thing was not right: I can't well explain myſelf; but there is to me ſomething odd in the whole buſineſs.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! I don't doubt but you will ſay ſo. You will find, however, that I have beauty enough left to make ſome noiſe in the world. The men, ſiſter, are the beſt judges of female beauty. Don't concern yourſelf about the affair, ſiſter: the men are the beſt judges; leave it all to them.

Mrs. HARLOW.

But only think of a lover you never ſaw but once at Ranelagh.

Miſs HARLOW.

Very true! but even then I ſaw what work I made in his heart. Don't you remember how he followed us up and down the room? Oh! I am in raptures with him, and he is in raptures with me, and in a few days, ſiſter, Mrs. Clerimont will be glad to ſee you.

*Enter* Mr. HARLOW.

Mr. HARLOW.

So, ſiſter! how ſtand matters now?

Miſs HARLOW.

As I could wiſh. I ſhall no more be a trouble to you. He has declared himſelf in the moſt warm and vehement manner; tho' my ſiſter has her doubts; ſhe is a good friend, ſhe is afraid of my ſucceſs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Pray, ſiſter, don't think ſo meanly of me. I underſtand that ſneer, Ma'am.

Miſs HARLOW.

And I underſtand you too, Ma'am.

Mr. HARLOW.

Come, come, I deſire we may have no quarrelling. You two are always wrangling. But when you are ſeparated, it is to be hoped you will then be more amicable. Things are now in a fair way. Tho', ſiſter, let me tell you I am afraid our India friend will think himſelf ill treated.

Mrs. HARLOW.

That's what I fear too: that's my reaſon for ſpeaking. Captain Cape, in my opinion, will have reaſon to think himſelf ill uſed.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! never throw away a thought on him. Mr. Clerimont has my heart; and now I think I am ſettled for life, ſiſter---I love to plague her *(aſide)* ---I ſay, ſiſter, whatever doubts you may have, you will ſee me ſettled for life, for life, for life, my dear ſiſter.

*Enter*

*Enter* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Dinner is ſerved, Sir.

Mr. HARLOW.

Very well! come, ſiſter, I give you joy. Let us in to dinner.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! vulgar!---I can't eat---I muſt go and dreſs my head over again, and do a thouſand things;---for I am determined I'll look this afternoon as well as ever I can. [*Exit.*

Mrs. HARLOW.

Is not all this amazing, my dear? her head is turned.

Mr. HARLOW.

Well, let it all paſs: don't you mind it: don't you ſay any thing. Let her get married if ſhe can. I am ſure I ſhall rejoice at it.

Mrs. HARLOW.

And upon my word, my dear, ſo ſhall I. If I interfere, it is purely out of friendſhip.

Mr. HARLOW.

Be adviſed by me: ſay no more to her. If the affair goes on, we ſhall fairly get rid of her. Her peeviſh humours, and her maiden temper, are become inſupportable. Come, let us in to dinner. If Mr. Clerimont marries her, which indeed will be odd enough, we ſhall then enjoy a little peace and quiet in our own houſe. [*Exit.*

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

What in the world could the man ſee in her? He will repent of his bargain in a week or a fortnight; that I am ſure he will. She is gone to dreſs now!---ha! ha!---

Oh! how ſhe rolls her pretty eyes in ſpite,
And looks delightfully with all her might!

Ha! ha! delightfully ſhe will look indeed!---

*End of the* FIRST ACT.

ACT

## ACT the SECOND.

*Enter a* SERVANT, *and* Capt. CAPE.

SERVANT.

YES, Sir, my maſter is at home: he has juſt done dinner, Sir.

Capt. CAPE.

Very well then; tell him I would ſpeak a word with him.

SERVANT.

I beg pardon, Sir; I am but a ſtranger in the family---who ſhall I ſay?

Capt. CAPE.

Capt. Cape, tell him.

SERVANT.

Yes, Sir, [*Exit.*

Capt. CAPE.

I can hardly believe my own eyes. S'death! I am almoſt inclined to think this letter, ſigned with Miſs Harlow's name, a mere forgery by ſome enemy, to drive me into an exceſs of paſſion, and ſo injure us both: I don't know what to ſay to it.

*Enter*

*Enter* Mr. HARLOW.

Capt. CAPE.

I have waited on you about an extraordinary affair; I can't comprehend it, Sir. Here is a letter with your ſiſter's name---Look at it, Sir: is that her hand-writing?

Mr. HARLOW.

Yes, Sir; I take it to be her writing.

Capt. CAPE.

And do you know the contents?

Mr. HARLOW.

I can't ſay I have read it; but---

Capt. Cape.

But you know the purport of it?

Mr. HARLOW.

Partly.

Capt. CAPE.

You do?---and is it not baſe treatment, Sir? Is it not unwarrantable? Can you juſtify her?

Mr. HARLOW.

For my part, I leave women to manage their own affairs. I am not fond of intermeddling.

Capt. CAPE.

But, Sir, let me aſk you: Was not every thing agreed upon? Are not the writings now in the lawyers hands? Was not next week fixed for our wedding?

Mr.

Mr. HARLOW.

I underſtood it ſo.

Capt. CAPE.

Very well then: you ſee how ſhe treats me. She writes me here in a contemptuous ſtile, that ſhe recalls her promiſe; it was raſhly given; ſhe has thought better of it; ſhe will liſten to me no more; ſhe is going to diſpoſe of herſelf to a gentleman with whom ſhe can be happy for life. There, that's free and eaſy, is not it? What do you ſay to that?

Mr. HARLOW.

Why really, Sir, it is not my affair. I have nothing to ſay to it.

Capt. CAPE.

Nothing to ſay to it!---Sir, I imagined I was dealing with people of honour.

Mr. HARLOW.

You have been dealing with a woman, and you know---

Capt. CAPE.

Yes, I know; I know the treachery of the ſex. Who is this gentleman, pray?

Mr. HARLOW.

His name is Clerimont. They have fixed the affair among themſelves, and amongſt them be it for me.

Capt. CAPE.

Very fine! mighty fine!---is Miſs Harlow at home, Sir?

Mr. HARLOW.

She is; and here ſhe comes this way.

Capt. CAPE.

Very well!---let me hear it from herſelf, that's all: I deſire to hear her ſpeak for herſelf.

Mr. HARLOW.

With all my heart. I'll leave you together: you know, Captain, I was never fond of being concerned in theſe affairs. [*Exit.*

*Enter* Miſs HARLOW.

Miſs HARLOW.

Capt. Cape, this is mighty odd: I thought my letter informed you---

Capt. CAPE.

Madam, I acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and, Madam, the uſage is ſo extraordinary, that I hold myſelf excuſable, if I refuſe to comply with the terms you impoſe upon me.

Miſs HARLOW.

Not comply? I don't underſtand you.

Capt. CAPE.

Miſtake me not; I am not come to whimper or to whine, and to make a puppy of myſelf again. That, Madam, is all blown over.

Miſs HARLOW.

Well, there is no harm done, and you will ſurvive this I hope.

Capt.

Capt. CAPE.

Survive it!

Miſs HARLOW.

Yes;---you wont't grow deſperate: ſuppoſe you were to order ſomebody to take care of you, becauſe you know fits of deſpair are ſudden, and you may raſhly do yourſelf a miſchief. Don't do any ſuch thing, I beg you won't.

Capt. CAPE.

This inſult, Madam!---Do myſelf a miſchief! Don't flatter yourſelf that it is in your power to make me unhappy. It is not vexation brings me hither, that let me aſſure you.

Miſs HARLOW.

Then let vexation take you away. We were never deſigned for one another.

Capt. CAPE.

My amazement brings me hither; amazement that any woman can behave---but I don't want to upbraid---I only come to aſk---for I can hardly as yet believe it---I only come to aſk if I am to credit this pretty epiſtle?

Miſs HARLOW.

Every ſyllable: therefore take your anſwer, Sir, and truce with your importunity.

Capt. CAPE.

Very well, Ma'am, very well---your humble ſervant, Madam---I promiſe you, Ma'am, I can repay this ſcorn with ſcorn; with tenfold ſcorn, Madam; ſuch as this treatment deſerves; that's

all: I ſay no more---your ſervant Ma'am---but let me aſk you---is this a juſt return for all the attendance I have paid you theſe three years paſt?

Miſs Harlow.

Perfectly juſt, Sir; three years!---how could you be a dangler ſo long? I told you what it would come to: can you think that raiſing a woman's expectation, and tiring her out of all patience, is the way to make ſure of her at laſt? you ought to have been a briſker lover, you ought indeed, Sir. I am now contracted to another, and ſo there is an end of every thing between us.

Capt. Cape.

Very well, Madam,---and yet I can't bear to be deſpiſed by her---and can you, Miſs Harlow, can you find it in your heart to treat me with this diſdain? have you no compaſſion?

Miſs Harlow.

No, poſitively none, Sir, none; none.

Capt. Cape.

Your own Capt. Cape, whom you------

Miſs Harlow.

Whom I deſpiſe.

Capt. Cape.

Whom you have ſo often encouraged to adore you.

Miſs Harlow.

Pray Sir, don't touch my hand: it is now the property of another.

Capt.

Capt. CAPE.

Can't you ſtill break off with him?

Miſs HARLOW.

No Sir, I can't; I won't; I love him, and if you are a man of honour, you will ſpeak to me no more; deſiſt, Sir, for if you don't, my brother ſhall tell you of it, and to-morrow Mr. Clerimont ſhall tell you of it.

Capt. CAPE.

Mr. Clerimont, Madam, ſhall fight me for daring------

Miſs HARLOW.

And muſt I fight you too moſt noble, valiant Captain?

Capt. CAPE.

Laughed at too!

Miſs HARLOW.

What a paſſion you are in!---I can't bear to ſee a man in ſuch a paſſion. Oh! I have a happy riddance of you: the violence of your temper is dreadful. I won't ſtay a moment longer with you; you frighten me: you have your anſwer,---and ſo your ſervant Sir. *Exit.*

Capt. CAPE.

Ay! ſhe is gone off like a fury, and the furies catch her, ſay I. I will never put up with this: I will find out this Mr. Clerimont: he ſhall be accountable to me; Mr. Harlow too ſhall be accountable; and---

*Enter*

*Enter* Mr. *and* Mrs. HARLOW.

Mr. Harlow, I am uſed very ill here, by all of you, and Sir, let me tell you---

Mr. HARLOW.

Nay; don't be angry with me. I was not to marry you.

Capt. CAPE.

But Sir, I can't help being angry. I muſt be angry: and let me tell you, you don't behave like a gentleman.

Mrs. HARLOW.

How can Mr. Harlow help it, Sir, if my ſiſter---

Mr. HARLOW.

You are too warm; you are indeed. Let us talk this matter over a bottle.

Capt. CAPE.

No, Sir: no bottle: over a cannon, if you will.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Mercy on me! I beg you won't talk in that terrible manner: you frighten me out of my wits.

Mr. HARLOW.

Be you quiet, my dear. Capt. Cape, I beg you will juſt ſtep into that room with me; and if, in the diſpatching of one bottle, I don't acquit myſelf of all ſiniſter dealing, why then---come, come, be a little moderate: you ſhall ſtep with me: I'll take it as a favour. Come, come, you muſt.

Capt.

Capt. CAPE.

I always found you a gentleman, Mr. Harlow, and ſo with all my heart, I don't care if I do talk the matter over.

Miſs HARLOW.

That's fair, and I am obliged to you. Come, I'll ſhew you the way. [*Exeunt.*

Mrs. HARLOW.

Juſt as I foreſaw: my ſiſter was ſure of him, and now is ſhe going to break off for a young man, who will deſpiſe her in a little time. I wiſh ſhe would have Capt. Cape.

*Enter* Miſs. HARLOW.

Miſs HARLOW.

Is he gone, ſiſter?

Mrs. HARLOW.

No; and here is the deuce and all to do. He is for fighting every body: upon my word you are wrong: you don't behave genteelly in the affair.

Miſs HARLOW.

Genteelly! I like that notion prodigiouſly: an't I going to marry genteelly?

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well, follow your own inclinations. I won't intermeddle any more, I promiſe you. I'll ſtep into the parlour, and ſee what they are about. [*Exit.*

Miſs

Miſs HARLOW.

As you pleaſe, Ma'am. I ſee plainly the ill-natured thing can't bear my ſucceſs. Heavens! here comes Mr. Clerimont.

*Enter* Mr. CLERIMONT.

Miſs HARLOW.

You are earlier than I expected, Sir.

CLERIMONT.

I have flown, Madam, upon the wings of love. I have ſeen my uncle: he will be here within this half hour. Every thing ſucceeds to my wiſhes. I hope there is no alteration here ſince I ſaw you.

Miſs HARLOW.

Nothing of moment, Sir.

CLERIMONT.

You alarm me: Mr. Harlow has not changed his mind, I hope.

Miſs HARLOW.

No, he continues in the ſame opinion.

CLERIMONT.

And your ſiſter---I tremble with doubt and fear---ſhe does not ſurely recede from the ſentiments ſhe flattered me with.

Miſs HARLOW.

Why there, indeed, I can't ſay much. She ſeems to---

CLE-

CLERIMONT.

How!

Miſs HARLOW.

She---I don't know what to make of her.

CLERIMONT.

I am on the rack: in pity, do not torture me.

Miſs HARLOW.

How tremblingly ſolicitous he is---Oh! I have made a ſure conqueſt. (*aſide*)---Why, ſhe, Sir---

CLERIMONT.

I am all attention, Madam. (*diſconcerted*)

Miſs HARLOW.

She does not ſeem entirely to approve.

CLERIMONT.

You kill me with deſpair.

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! he is deeply ſmitten. (*aſide*)---She thinks another match would ſuit better.

CLERIMONT.

Another match!

Miſs HARLOW.

Yes, another; an India captain, who has made his propoſals; but I ſhall take care to ſee him diſmiſſed.

CLERIMONT.

Will you?

Miſs HARLOW.

I promiſe you I will. Though he runs much in my ſiſter's head, and ſhe has taken great pains to bring the family over to her opinion.

CLERIMONT.

How cruel! I could not have expected that from her. But has ſhe fixed her heart upon a match with this other gentleman?

Miſs HARLOW.

Why, truly I think ſhe has: but my will in this affair ought, and ſhall be conſulted.

CLERIMONT.

It is highly proper, Madam. Your long acquaintance with the world---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Long acquaintance, Sir! I have a few years experience only.

CLERIMONT.

That is, your good ſenſe, ma'am---Oh! confound my tongue! how that ſlipt from me. (*aſide*)---Your good ſenſe,---your early good ſenſe,---and---and---inclination ſhould be conſulted.

Mrs. HARLOW.

And they ſhall, Sir. Hark! I hear her coming. I'll leave you this opportunity to ſpeak to her once more,

more, and try to win her over by perſuaſion. It will make things eaſy if you can. I am gone, Sir.

[*Curtſies affectedly and Exit.*

CLERIMONT.

The happineſs of my life will be owing to you, Madam. The woman is really better-natured than I thought. She comes, the lovely tyrant comes.

*Enter* Mrs. HARLOW.

CLERIMONT.

She triumphs in her cruelty, and I am ruined. (*Aſide*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

You ſeem uneaſy, Sir. I hope no misfortune---

CLERIMONT.

The ſevereſt misfortune!---you have broke my heart.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I break your heart, Sir?

CLERIMONT.

Yes, cruel fair, you---you have undone me.

Mrs. HARLOW.

How can that be, Sir?

CLERIMONT.

And you ſeem unconſcious of the miſchief you have made.

Mrs. HARLOW

Pray unriddle.

CLERIMONT.

Your ſiſter has told me all.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Ha! ha! what has ſhe told you, Sir?

CLERIMONT.

It may be ſport to you, but to me 'tis death.

Mrs. HARLOW.

What is death?

CLERIMONT.

The gentleman from India, Madam---- I have heard it all---you can give him a preference; you can blaſt my hopes, my fond delighted hopes, which you yourſelf had cheriſhed.

Mrs. HARLOW.

The gentleman is a very good ſort of a man.

CLERIMONT.

She loves him, I ſee---(*aſide*)---Madam, I perceive my doom is fixed, and fixed by you.

Mrs. HARLOW.

How have I fixed your doom?---If I ſpeak favourably of Captain Cape, it is no more than he deſerves.

CLE-

CLERIMONT.

Diſtraction! I cannot bear this---*(aſide)*

Mrs. HARLOW.

I believe there is nobody that knows the gentleman, but will give him his due praiſe.

CLERIMONT.

Love! love! love! *(aſide)*

Mrs. HARLOW.

And beſides, his claim is in fact prior to yours.

CLERIMONT.

And muſt love be governed, like the buſineſs of mechanics, by thy laws of tyrant cuſtom? Can you think ſo, Madam?

Mrs. HARLOW.

Why, Sir, you know I am not in love.

CLERIMONT.

Confuſion!---No, Madam, I ſee you are not.

Mrs. HARLOW.

And really, Sir, reaſonably ſpeaking, my ſiſter is for treating Capt. Cape very ill. He has been dancing attendance here theſe three years.

CLERIMGNT.

Yet that you knew, when you were pleaſed to fan the riſing flame that matchleſs beauty had kindled in my heart.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Matchleſs beauty!----ha! ha!----I cannot but laugh at that. (*aſide*)

CLERIMONT.

Laugh, Madam, if you will at the pangs you yourſelf occaſion: yes, triumph, if you will: I am reſigned to my fate, ſince you will have it ſo.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I have it ſo!---you ſeem to frighten yourſelf without cauſe. If I ſpeak favourably of any body elſe, what then? I am not to marry him, you know.

CLERIMONT.

An't you?

Mrs. HARLOW.

I!---No, truly; thank Heaven!

CLERIMONT.

She revives me. (*aſide*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

That muſt be as my ſiſter pleaſes.

CLERIMONT.

Muſt it?

Mrs. HARLOW.

Muſt it! To be ſure it muſt.

CLERIMONT.

And may I hope ſome intereſt in your heart?

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

My heart, Sir!

CLERIMONT.

While it is divided, while another has poſſeſſion of but part of it---

Mrs. HARLOW.

I don't underſtand him! Why, it has been given away long ago.

CLERIMONT.

I pray you do not tyrannize me thus with alternate doubts and fears. If you will but bleſs me with the leaſt kind return---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Kind return! what, would you have me fall in love with you?

CLERIMONT.

It will be generous to him who adores you.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Adore me!

CLERIMONT.

Even to idolatry.

Mrs. HARLOW.

What can he mean? I thought my ſiſter was the object of your adoration.

CLERIMONT.

Your ſiſter, Ma'am! I ſhall ever reſpect her as my

my friend on this occaſion, but love---no--no---ſhe is no object for that.

Mrs. HARLOW.

No!

CLERIMONT.

She may have been handſome in her time, but that has been all over long ago.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Well! this is charming---I wiſh ſhe heard him now, with her new-fangled airs. (*aſide*) But let me underſtand you, Sir: adore me?

CLERIMONT.

You!---you! and only you! by this fair hand--- (*kiſſes it*)

Mrs. HARLOW.

Hold, hold. This is going too far. But pray, Sir, have you really conceived a paſſion for me?

CLERIMONT.

You know I have; a paſſion of the tendereſt nature.

Mrs. HARLOW.

And was that your drift in coming hither?

CLERIMONT.

What elſe could induce me?

Mrs. HARLOW.

And introduced yourſelf here to have an opportunity of ſpeaking to me?

CLE-

CLERIMONT.

My angel! don't torment me thus.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Angel! and what do you ſuppoſe Mr. Harlow will ſay to this?

CLERIMONT.

Oh! Ma'am---he! he approves my paſſion.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Does he really? I muſt ſpeak to him about that.

CLERIMONT.

Do ſo, Ma'am, you will find me a man of more honour than to deceive you.

Miſs HARLOW.

Well! it will be whimſical enough if he does. And my ſiſter too, this will be a charming diſcovery for her. *(aſide)*---Ha! ha! well! really, Sir, this is mighty odd. I'll ſpeak to Mr. Harlow about this matter, and you ſhall know his anſwer. (*going.*)

CLERIMONT.

And may I then flatter myſelf?

Mrs. HARLOW.

Oh! to be ſure: ſuch an honourable project! I'll ſtep to him this moment; and then, ſiſter, I ſhall make ſuch a piece of work for you. *Exit.*

CLERIMONT.

Very well, Ma'am, ſee Mr. Harlow: he will confirm it all. While there is life there is hope. To loſe

that matchleſs beauty, were the worſt miſery in the power of fortune to heap upon me.

*Enter* Miſs HARLOW.

Miſs HARLOW.

I beg pardon for leaving you all this time---Well, Sir, what ſays my ſiſter?

CLERIMONT.

She has given me ſome glimmering hopes.

Miſs HARLOW.

Don't be uneaſy about her; it ſhall be as I pleaſe---

CLERIMONT.

But with her own free conſent it would be better: however, to you I am bound by every tie, and thus let me ſeal a vow---*(kiſſes her hand.)*

Miſs HARLOW.

He certainly is a very paſſionate lover. He is ready to eat my hand up with kiſſes. I wiſh my ſiſter ſaw this. (*aſide.*) Huſh! I hear Captain Cape's voice. The hideous Sea-monſter! he is coming this way. I would not ſee him again for the world. I'll withdraw for a moment, Sir. You'll excuſe me: (*kiſſes her hand and curtſies very low*) your moſt obedient---Oh! he is a charming man.

[*Curtſeys and Exit.*

*Enter* Capt. CAPE.

Capt. CAPE.

There ſhe goes, the perfidious! Sir, I underſtand your name is Clerimont.

CLERIMONT.

CLERIMONT.

At your ſervice, Sir.

Capt. CAPE.

Then, draw this moment.

CLERIMONT.

Draw, Sir! for what?

Capt. CAPE.

No evaſion, Sir.

CLERIMONT,

Explain the cauſe.

Capt. CAPE.

The cauſe is too plain: your making love to that lady, who went out there this moment.

CLERIMONT.

That lady! not I upon my honour, Sir.

Capt. CAPE.

No ſhuffling, Sir, draw.

CLERIMONT.

Sir, I can repel an Injury like this: but your quarrel is groundleſs. And, Sir, if ever I made love to that lady, I will lay my boſom naked to your ſword. That lady!---I reſign all manner of pretenſion to her.

Capt. CAPE.

You reſign her?

CLERIMONT.

Entirely.

Capt. CAPE.

Then I am pacified. (*puts up his ſword.*)

CLERIMONT.

Upon my word, Sir, I never ſo much as thought of the lady.

*Enter* Mr. HARLOW.

Mr. HARLOW.

So, Sir, fine doings you have been carrying on here!

CLERIMONT.

Sir!

Mr. HARLOW.

You have been attempting my wife, I find.

CLERIMONT.

Upon my word, Mr. Harlow---

Mr. HARLOW.

You have behaved in a very baſe manner, and I inſiſt upon ſatisfaction. (*draws his ſword*)

CLERIMONT.

This is the ſtrangeſt accident! I aſſure you, Sir, ---only give me leave.

Mr.

Mr. HARLOW.

I will not give you leave---I inſiſt---

Capt. CAPE.

Nay, Mr. Harlow. This is neither time or place: and beſides, hear the gentleman; I have been over-haſty, and he has ſatisfied me: only hear him.

Mr. HARLOW.

Sir, I will believe my own wife. Come on, Sir.

CLERIMONT.

Without cauſe I cannot: I have no quarrel, Sir. You may believe me, Mr. Harlow, when I aſſure you, that I came into this houſe upon honourable principles: induced, Sir, by my regard for Miſs Harlow.

Capt. CAPE.

For Miſs Harlow!---wounds! draw this moment.

CLERIMONT.

Again! this is downright madneſs: two upon me at once! you will murder me between you.

Mr. HARLOW.

There is one too many upon him ſure enough: and ſo, captain, put up your ſword.

Capt. CAPE.

Reſign your pretenſions to Miſs Harlow.

CLERIMONT.

CLERIMONT.

Reſign Miſs Harlow!---not for the univerſe: in her cauſe, I can be as ready as any bravo of ye all. (*draws his ſword.*)

Mr. HARLOW.

For heaven's ſake, Captain Cape, moderate your anger; this is neither time nor place. I have been too raſh myſelf: I beg you will be pacified. (*He puts up.*)---Mr. Clerimont ſheath your ſword.

CLERIMONT.

I obey, Sir.

Mr. HARLOW.

Captain Cape, how can you? you promiſed me you would let things take their courſe? if my ſiſter will marry the gentleman, how is he to blame?

Capt. CAPE.

Well argued, Sir: I have done:---ſhe is a worthleſs woman, that's all.

CLERIMONT.

A worthleſs woman, Sir!

Capt. CAPE.

Ay! worthleſs.

CLERIMONT.

Damnation!---Draw, Sir!

Mr. HARLOW.

Nay, now, Mr. Clerimont, you are too warm; and

and there's a gentleman coming---this is your uncle, I ſuppoſe.

CLERIMONT.

It is, and he comes opportunely.

*Enter* Mr. HEARTWELL.

Mr. HARLOW. (*aſide.*)

I'll wave all diſputes now, that I may conclude my ſiſter's marriage.

HEARTWELL.

My nephew has informed me, Sir, of the honor you have done him, and I am come to ratify the treaty by my conſent.

Mr. HARLOW.

I thought it neceſſary to have the advice of Mr. Clerimont's Friends, as he is very young, and my ſiſter not very handſome.

She is an angel, Sir.

HEARTWELL.

Patience, Charles, patience. My nephew's eſtate will provide for his eldeſt born, and upon the younger branches of his marriage, I mean to ſettle my fortune.

Mr. HARLOW.

Generouſly ſpoken, Sir, and after that declaration, there is no occaſion for delay. Who waits there? ---tell the ladies they are wanted.

HEARTWELL.

HEARTWELL.

I have ever loved my nephew, and ſince he tells me he has made a good choice, I ſhall be glad to ſee him happy.

Capt. CAPE.

But, Sir, let me tell you, that your nephew has uſed me baſely, and Sir---

Mr. HARLOW.

Po! Captain Cape, now you are wrong again: every thing was ſettled between us in the other room: recollect yourſelf; I beg you will---Oh! here come the ladies.

*Enter Mrs.* HARLOW *and Miſs* HARLOW.

Miſs HARLOW.

Now, ſiſter, you ſhall ſee that I have completed my conqueſt.

CLERIMONT.

At length, I am happy indeed! my lovely, charming bride! thus let me ſnatch thee to my heart, and thus, and thus---(*embraces Mrs. Harlow.*)

Mr. HARLOW.

Death and diſtraction! before my face---
(*puſhing him away*)

CLERIMONT.

Prithee indulge my tranſport: my life, my angel!

Mr.

Mr. HARLOW.

I deſire you will deſiſt, Sir: theſe liberties may provoke me too far.

CLERIMONT.

Nay, nay, prithee be quiet: my charming, charming wife!

Mr. HARLOW.

That lady is not your wife.

CLERIMONT.

How my wife, not my wife!---extaſy and bliſs!

Mr. HARLOW.

Come, come, Sir, this is too much: I deſire ---

CLERIMONT.

Ha! ha! you are very pleaſant, Sir.

Mr. HARLOW.

This is downright madneſs, but it ſhall not excuſe you: that lady is my wife.

CLERIMONT.

Sir!

Mr. HARLOW.

I ſay, Sir, that lady is my wife.

Capt. CAPE.

Ha! ha! I ſee through this: it is a comedy of errors, I believe. (*ſings*)

HEARTWELL.

What does all this mean?

CLERIMONT.

Your wife, Sir!

Mr. HARLOW.

Yes, my wife: and there is my ſiſter, if you pleaſe to take her.

CLERIMONT.

Sir!

Mr. HARLOW.

Sir, this is the lady whom you have deſired in marriage.

CLERIMONT.

Who I, Sir? I beg your pardon: that lady I took to be your wife (*pointing to Miſs Harlow.*)---and that lady (*pointing to Mrs. Harlow.*) I took to be your ſiſter.

Capt. CAPE *and* Mrs. HARLOW.

Ha! ha! ha!---

Miſs HARLOW.

How! how is this? have I been made a fool of all this time? furies! torture! madneſs!

Capt. CAPE.

Ha! ha!---my lady fair is taken in, I think.

Mrs. HARLOW.

Siſter, the men don't ſee with my eyes---ha! ha!

Capt. CAPE.

Ha! ha! the gentleman is no dangler, Ma'am.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOW.

This is a complete conqueſt my ſiſter has made.

Miſs HARLOW.

I can't bear this---Sir, I deſire I may not be made a jeſt of----did not you ſolicit me? importune me?

CLERIMONT.

For your intereſt in that lady, whom I took for Miſs Harlow. I beg your pardon if I am miſtaken: I hope there it no harm done.

Miſs HARLOW.

Yes, Sir, but there is harm done. I am made ſport of; expoſed to deriſion---Oh! I cannot bear this---I cannot bear it---*(cries)*

Mrs. HARLOW.

Don't cry, ſiſter: ſome faces preſerve their bloom longer than others you know---ha! ha!

Capt. CAPE.

Loll toll loll---

HEARTWELL.

This is all a riddle to me: is that lady your wife, Sir?

Mr. HARLOW.

She is, Sir.

HEARTWELL.

And pray nephew; you took that lady for Mr. Harlow's ſiſter, I ſuppoſe.

CLERIMONT.

I did, Sir. I beg pardon for the trouble I have given---I am in ſuch confuſion, I can hardly---

HEARTWELL.

Well, well! the thing is cleared up, and you have been proceeding upon a miſtake. But you ſhould have known what ground you went upon---ha! ha! I can't help laughing neither.

Mr. HARLOW.

Why faith, nor I---ha! ha!

CLERIMONT.

Since matters have turned out ſo unexpectedly, I beg pardon for my miſtake, and Sir, I take my leave---*(going)*

Miſs HARLOW.

And will you treat me in this manner, Sir? Will you draw me into ſuch a ſcrape, and not---

CLERIMONT.

Madam, that gentleman would cut my throat: his claim is prior to mine; and I dare ſay, he will be very glad to be reconciled.

Miſs HARLOW.

You are a baſe man then, and I reject you. Captain Cape I ſee my error, and I reſign myſelf to you.

Capt. CAPE.

No, Madam, I beg to be excuſed. I have been a dangler too long. I ought to have been a briſker lover. I ſhall endeavour to ſurvive it, Madam; I won't

won't do myſelf a miſchief: I have my anſwer, and I am off, Madam. Loll toll loll---

Mrs. HARLOW.

Ha! ha! I told you this my dear ſiſter.

CLERIMONT.

Madam, I dare ſay the gentleman will think better of it. Mr. Harlow, I am ſorry for all this confuſion, and I beg pardon of the whole company for my miſtake. Mrs. Harlow, I wiſh you all happineſs, Ma'am---Angelic creature! what a misfortune to loſe her! [*Bows and Exit.*

Capt. CAPE.

And I will follow his example---Miſs Harlow I wiſh you all happineſs. Angelic creature! what a misfortune to loſe her!---Upon my ſoul I think you a moſt admirable jilt, and ſo now you may go, and bewail your virginity in the mountains---loll toll loll--- [*Exit.*

Miſs HARLOW.

Oh! oh! I can't bear to be thus diſgraced. I'll go and hide myſelf from the world for ever. The men are all ſavages, barbarians, monſters, and I hate the whole ſex. [*Exit.*

Mrs. HARLOW.

My dear ſiſter, with her beauty and her conqueſts, ha! ha!

Mr. HARLOW.

Ha! ha! whimſical and ridiculous!

HEART-

HEARTWELL.

Sir, my nephew is young: I am ſorry for this ſcene of errors, and I hope you'll aſcribe the whole to his inexperience.

Mr. HARLOW.

I certainly ſhall, Sir.

Mrs. HARLOW.

I cautioned my ſiſter ſufficiently about this matter, but vanity got the better of her, and leaves her now a whimſical inſtance of folly and affectation.

In vain the FADED TOAST her mirror tries,
And counts the cruel murders of her eyes;
For Ridicule, fly-peeping o'er her head,
Will point the roſes and the lillies dead;
And while, fond ſoul! ſhe weaves her myrtle chain,
She proves a ſubject of the comic ſtrain.

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THE